173
●174
175
539

[For information on the origins and traditional history of clans and phratries, see Categories 614 and 615.]

173
174
175
539

[For information on the origins and traditional history of clans and phratries, see Categories 614 and 615.]

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

782 at the temple, the head and carcase being placed in front
[784] of the image. The witness steps over the carçase, and this forms the oath. If the evidence is false, it is believed that some evil will happen to him."

101 The name Badaga or Vadugan means northerner, and
• 114 the Badagas are believed to be descended from Canarese colonists from the Mysore country, who migrated to the Nīlgiris three centuries ago owing to famine, political
141 turmoil, or local oppression in their own country. It is
144 worthy of notice, in this connection, that the head of the Badagas, like that of the Todas and Kotas, is dolicho-cephalic, and not of the mesaticephalic or sub-brachy-cephalic type, which prevails throughout Mysore, as in other Canarese areas.

	Average.		
	Cephalic length. cm.	Cephalic breadth. cm.	Cephalic index.
Badaga ...	18·9	13·6	71·7
Toda ...	19·4	14·2	73·3
Kota ...	19·2	14·2	74·1

Of the Mysorean heads, the following are a few typical examples :—

	Average.		
	Cephalic length. cm.	Cephalic breadth. cm.	Cephalic index.
Ganiga ...	18·5	14·3	77·6
Bēdar ...	18·3	14·3	77·7
Holeya ...	17·9	14·1	79·1
Mandya Brahman	18·5	14·8	80·2
Vakkaliga ...	17·7	14·5	81·7

539 Concerning the origin of the Badagas, the following legend is current. Seven brothers and their sisters were living on the Talamalai hills. A Muhammadan

539 ruler attempted to ravish the girl, whom the brother saved from him by flight. They settled down near the present village of Bethalhada. After a short stay there, the brothers separated, and settled in different parts of the Nīlgiris, which they peopled. Concerning the second brother, Hethappa, who had two daughters, the story goes that, during his absence on one occasion, two Todas forced their way into his house, ravished his wife, and possessed themselves of his wordly effects. Hearing of what had occurred, Hethappa sought the assistance of two Balayaru in revenging himself on the Todas. They readily consented to help him, in return for a promise that they should marry his daughters. The Todas were killed, and the present inhabitants of the village Hulikallu are supposed to be the descendants of the Balayaru and Badaga girls. The seven brothers are now worshipped under the name Hethappa or Hetha.

• 174 In connection with the migration of the Badagas to the Nīlgiris, the following note is given in the Gazetteer [175] of the Nīlgiris. "When this flitting took place there is little to show. It must have occurred after the foundation of the Lingāyat creed in the latter half of the twelfth century, as many of the Badagas are Lingāyats by faith, and sometime before the end of the sixteenth century, since in 1602 the Catholic priests from the west coast found them settled on the south of the plateau, and observing much the same relations with the Todas as subsist to this day. The present state of our knowledge does not enable us to fix more nearly the date of the [197] migration. That the language of the Badagas, which is a form of Canarese, should by now have so widely altered from its original as to be classed as a separate dialect argues that the movement took place nearer the twelfth than the sixteenth century. On the other hand, the

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

fact (pointed out by Dr. Rivers *) that the Badagas are not mentioned in a single one of the Todas' legends about their gods, whereas the Kotas, Kurumbas, and Irulas, each play a part in one or more of these stories, raises the inference that the relations between the Badagas and the Todas are recent as compared with those between the other tribes. A critical study of the Badaga dialect might perhaps serve to fix within closer limits the date of the migration. As now spoken, this tongue contains letters (two forms of r for instance) and numerous words, which are otherwise met with only in ancient books, and which strike most strangely upon the ear of the present generation of Canarese. The date when some of these letters and words became obsolete might possibly be traced, and thus aid in fixing the period when the Badagas left the low country. It is known that the two forms of r, for example, had dropped out of use prior to the time of the grammarian Kēsirāja, who lived in the thirteenth century, and that the word betta (a hill), which the Badagas use in place of the modern bettu, is found in the thirteenth century work Sabdamanidarpana."

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Nīlgiris, that "Nelliālam, about eight miles north-west of Dēvāla as the crow flies, is the residence of the Nelliālam Arasu (Urs), who has been recognised as the janmi (landlord) of a considerable area in the Munanād amsam, but is in reality a Canarese-speaking Lingāyat of Canarese extraction, who follows the ordinary Hindu law of inheritance, and is not a native of the Wynād or of Malabar. Family tradition, though now somewhat misty, says that in the beginning two brothers named Sadāsiva Rāja Urs and Bhujanga Rāja Urs moved (at some date and for

[113]

* The Todas, 1906.

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

some reason not stated) from Ummattūr (in the present Chāmarājnagar taluk of Mysore), and settled at Malaikōta, the old fort near Kalhatti. Their family deities were Bhujangēsvara and Ummattūr Urakātti, which are still worshipped as such. They brought with them a following of Bēdars and Badagas, and thereafter always encouraged the immigration to the hills of more Canarese people. The village of Bannimara, a mile west of Kalhatti, is still peopled by Bēdars who are said to be descendants of people of that caste who came with the two brothers; and to this day, when the Badagas of the plateau have disputes of difficulty, they are said to go down to Nelliālam with presents (kānikai) in their hands, and ask the Arasu to settle their differences, while, at the time of their periodical ceremonies (manavalai) to the memory of their ancestors, they send a deputation to Nelliālam to invite representatives of the Arasu to be present."

Close to the village of Bethalhada is a row of cromlechs carved with figures of the sun and moon, human beings, animals, etc., and enclosed within a stone kraal, which the Badagas claim to be the work of their ancestors, to whom periodical offerings are made. At the time of my visit, there were within one of the cromlechs a conch shell, lingam, bell, and flowers. A number of these sculptured cromlechs at Sholūr, Mēlūr, and other spots on the Nīlgiris, are described and figured by Breeks,* who records that the cromlech at Jakata Kambē is interesting as being the place of the yearly sacrifice performed by the Badagas of the Jakanēri grāma (village) by their Kāni Kurumba. And he adds that the Badagas would seem to have usually selected the

* Account of the Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilagiris, 1873.

615 are regarded as such. They are priests to all the Bada-
[193] gas of the Lingāyat class, and are strict vegetarians. They do not intermarry with any of the other high caste Badaga sects. Udaya was, and is the title assumed by the Maisūr Rājas, and those Badagas, by being thus designated as a caste, claim superior blood in their veins." The Lingāyat Badagas are commonly called Lingakutti.

• [174] "Next in rank come the Hāruvas. From their name being so closely connected with the Āryas—the respectable—and from their habit of wearing the Brāhmanical thread, we are warranted in believing that they must originally have been the poor Brāhman priests of the Badagas that migrated to this country (the Nīlgiris), though they have now got themselves closely mingled
[193] with the Badagas. These Hāruvas are also strict vege-
[532] tarians, and act as priests." It has been suggested that the Hāruvas (jumper) derive their name from the fire-walking ceremony, which they perform periodically. A further, and more probable suggestion has been made to me that Hāruva comes from a Canarese word meaning to beg or pray; hence one who begs or prays, and so a Brāhman. The Canarese Basava Purāna frequently uses the word in sense. "The Adhikāris are to a certain extent vegetarians. The other two high castes, and of course the low caste Toreyas also, have no objection of any kind to eating flesh. It is also said that the vegetarian Adhikāri, if he marries into a flesh-eating caste of the Badagas, betakes himself to this latter very readily." The Kanakas are stated by Mr. Grigg to be the accountants, who were probably introduced when the hills were under the sway of the Tamil chiefs. This would, however, seem to be very improbable. "The Toreyas are regarded as sons and servants to the five high caste Badaga sects—to the Hāruvas especially.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

nature, are cited to explain the beginning of particular lineages or villages. The political tales explain the origin of villages and the emergence of various village officials. The accounts of who settled which place now explain the pattern of exogamy within the community. A fourth group of legends embrace all sorts of events and arrangements resulting from Badagas' contact with the Toda, Kota and Kurumba tribes indigenous to the area. These legends validate the whole system of economic interdependence which has held these groups rigidly together for so long and has led to a minimum division of labour within the Badaga community.

Here are the quasi-historical events Badagas have chosen to remember. Yet the one great event of their past not clearly recalled now is the actual flight from Mysore. They are explicit that their ancestors did not all come to the Nilgiris at the same time, and yet many nowadays claim they had been refugees fleeing from Tippu Sultan. So vague are people about their ancestors' flight that the only legend I have located on the subject is obviously coloured by a nineteenth-century borrowing from the Book of Exodus. It tells how the Badagas, hotly pursued by Moslem soldiers, came to the Moyar River, the northern limit of the district, at which point the waters opened up and enabled them to pass. As one might guess the pursuers were all drowned when the river closed up again behind the Badagas.

While it may be true that the latest arrivals were fleeing from Tippu or the four Mysore Wars, the great bulk of the people were refugees from earlier scourges or were purposely brought to settle the hills. The 370 villages in which they now live were virtually all in existence when the British first settled there a mere twenty years after Tippu's death. By the start of the nineteenth century the Badagas were consolidated as a Nilgiri society and their work of colonization completed.

For the early days of their settlement we fortunately have the independent record of an Italian priest who visited the Nilgiris in 1603 and met both Badagas and Todas there. When we couple this fact with the linguistic evidence that Badagas speak an archaic dialect of Kannada, it becomes most likely that the first major wave of refugees arrived as the Moslem hordes were destroying the great Hindu empire of Vijayanagar in Karnataka in 1565. There is no doubt that this was the direction from which the Badagas came. Aside from speaking a dialect of Kannada, their very name means 'northerner', and their adherence to the

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

Lingayat faith is equally telling, for the sect is almost confined to Karnataka State. 174

Nor are Badaga legends more informative about the period *before* they left Mysore (i.e., Karnataka). The names of a few ancestral villages there are still recalled, but little else. The Ha:ruva clan are reputed (chiefly by themselves) to have been Brahmins; the Wodea phratry bears the same name as a high-ranking Lingayat subcaste in Mysore. But beyond these sparse ideas and the general impression that the refugees had not been urban we can really say nothing about 'Badaga' social organization prior to their migration from the core area. Perhaps that is the way they would have it, for there is nothing very relevant to their present organization in a pattern of hierarchically organized, multicaste villages—which is what recent Mysore society has been and presumably was in medieval times.

Once settled on the Nilgiri Hills the immigrants encountered challenges that were new to them. Life in Mysore during the Vijayanagar Empire and after its collapse had undoubtedly not been calm; indeed many during those troubled years were induced to desert their native villages. Yet the regulation of their lives had until this exodus been certain: the demands of the religious calendar, of caste regulations, of client and patron, and of the ruling families were well known and omnipresent. One could only escape from that society, if need be, by embracing nature in the guise of an ascetic. 175

In the Nilgiris the separation of society and nature was perhaps more severe, a stark contrast which would not brook the ambivalence of ascetics wandering beyond the pale of society into the comforting embrace of nature. Here asceticism was unknown and nature anything but warm: she flaunted a dismal climate in which men could easily die from exposure and cold when cut off from their fellows. The jungles surrounding every hamlet were infested with all the dangerous animals known to Mysore, but here they were more proximate, seemingly more numerous and minatory. The small community of Badagas collaborated comfortably with their neighbours, the Todas and Kotas. But around this plural society they all drew a rigid boundary: everything beyond it was the terrifying realm of the wild. It contained not only the obvious terrors, the tigers, panthers, elephants, hyenas, buffaloes, wolves and bears, but the even more frightening and mysterious Kurumba sorcerers, who could turn into any one of these animals. This sharp

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

The Migration from Mysore

There is no doubt that before they settled in the Nilgiris the homeland of the Badagas lay in the Mysore Plain. Their own legends as well as those of the Kotas are quite explicit on this point, and some of the clans are even able to identify places in Mysore whence their ancestors came. (The most northerly village they now inhabit is still within Karnataka State.)

One need look no further than their language for confirmation of the legend. There are six discernible dialects of Baḍagu that we identify as Standard, Wodea, Kumba:ra-Be:da, Kundena:ḍu, Wainad and Ha:sanu:ru. The dialects are differentiated as much by vocabulary as by phonology and are demonstrably variant forms of Kannada speech. No linguist has ever claimed anything other than this for Baḍagu, since it and the Kannada of Mysore are, with some effort, mutually intelligible.

The very name *Baḍaga* is usually cited as prime evidence of their origin to the north of the Nilgiris:[1] the Kannada word *baḍaga* means 'northerner'. It also has the meaning 'servant'. If we postulate that the name derives from Kannada *baḍaka* instead, then we have the additional meanings 'lean, thin, feeble man' or 'a man who beats and bangs' (Kittel, 1894, 1068-1073). There are thus four possible etymologies for the name. The last two meanings verge on the scurrilous, however, and would hardly have been used by the immigrants in self-identification. One would expect such epithets to be applied to immigrants only by some other group, perhaps the Todas had they known Kannada; yet Todas now call

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

174 them *ma:v*. But were any of the Badagas ever servants?

There are two small phratries living on the northern edge of the plateau near Si:gu:ru. These are the Kumba:ras ('potters') and the Be:das ('hunters'), both of whom report they came initially to this locality while in the service of the chieftain of Ummattu:r (southern Mysore district). The title of 'servant' might have been applied to both these groups but that would not explain how the 615 entire immigrant community came to be called *Badaga*. In this context it is particularly worth noting that most of the immigrants arrived before the Be:das and Kumba:ras, who reached the hills in the seventeenth century; yet in 1603 Finicio was already calling the whole community Badega.[2]

001 We are thus left with the presumption that Badagas are so called because of their northern origin.[3] The case of the Be:das and Kumba:ras, phratries with the same material culture and social organization as other Badagas and a demonstrable tie with Karnataka, merely bears out the connexion with that state.

795 The fact that a sizeable minority (over 10,000) of the community is Lingayat further underlines the tie with Mysore, for this religious sect finds nearly all of its followers within Karnataka State, virtually none being in Tamil Nadu apart from these in the Nilgiri region. Some Lingayat Badagas are even able to relate how their ancestors left two now-deserted villages in Mysore and that they were then already converts to Lingayatism (or Virashaivism).

DATING THE MIGRATION

121 Legends are always inaccurate over dates, if only because they pass from generation to generation without modification of reference to times past. There are, however, various other kinds of evidence which also shed some light on the dating of the migration.

Published Estimates

174 Several writers well versed in Badaga culture have hazar-
114 ded guesses as to the dating, based in part on legends they heard. Serious attention should be paid, I feel, to the earlier publications:

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

Author	*Date of publication*	*Estimate*
John Sullivan	1819 (p. liv)	'about 300 years ago'
Benjamin Ward	1821 (p. lxx)	'about four centuries ago'
Thomas Baber	1830 (p. 315)	'about three centuries ago'
Henry Harkness	1832 (pp. 105–106)	'about six generations ago, during the anarchy which succeeded upon the downfall of the Vijayanagara empire.' i.e., 1565
Harry Congreve	1847 (p. 122)	'six generations ago'
John Ouchterlony	1848 (p. 81)	'3 or 4 centuries ago'
John Dulles	1855 (pp. 458–459)	'six generations since'
George Pope	1879 (p. 346, note)	"Many fled . . . in 1603"
William Stokes	1883b (p. 288)	'about 322 years ago'
Harold Stuart	1893 (p. 243)	'about three centuries ago'
Hanna Rhiem	1900 (p. 498, trans.)	'about three hundred years ago'
Edmond Périé	1933 (p. 97, trans.)	'some 350 years . . . when the Vijayanagar Empire collapsed'
M.K. Belli Gowder	1938–41 (pp. 5–8)	'seven hundred years back', or 'from 1300 to 1600'
N. Kariabettan	1958b (p. 2, trans)	'in the 11th Century'

It will be seen that nearly all of these authorities place the migration in the sixteenth century, which was when the Vijayanagar Empire (covering roughly Karnataka) broke up. M.K. Belli Gowder correctly dismisses the oft-mentioned ravages of Tippu Sultan in the late eighteenth century as a cause of the migration and instead suggests that the Moslem invasion responsible was that of Malik Kafur, the Sultan Ala-ud-din's favourite slave, who laid waste the Hoysala kingdom in 1311.[5] Kariabettan, another modern Badaga writer, presents no evidence whatever for his eleventh century dating and is not to be relied upon.

Linguistic Evidence

No competent study of Badagu has yet been completed, but

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

medieval town of gold or iron miners, whose mines were protected by a now-disappeared mud fortress. Traces of their town stretch for nearly a kilometer.[7] Badaga traditions do not mention this mining activity, and there is no basis for supposing Badagas initially occupied the hills as prospectors or mine-slaves. If such old quarries (which might even be Roman) have any relevance at all to Badaga history, it can only be because the Ummattu:r chieftains may have turned their eyes towards the Nilgiris in search of the gold that it was rumoured could be found there. In recent times there has been no gold mining in the district, except in the Wainad during the feverish speculation of 1879 1882. (Francis, 1908, 16-19; for other references, see Hockings, 1975, 49-50; 1978, 43-47).

While archaeology is of no assistance, kinship provides a rough guide to the antiquity of the Badaga community. The Gauda headman of Tu:ne:ri, paramount chief of the Badagas, can name nineteen generations of forefathers. His was probably the first village founded (Francis, 1908, 364), and as seventeen of the headmen were resident there the antiquity of Tu:ne:ri must go back to the early seventeenth century if we allow twenty years per generation.[8]

Another line of argument is that all Hindu Badagas are Shaivites (including those who are Virashaivas), whereas in southern Mysore there is now a large minority of Vaishnavites. That sect had its inception there with the conversion of the Mysore kings to Vaishnavism around 1610, which suggests that the Badagas were already in the Nilgiris by that date and so not affected in the way that lowland communities were (Grigg, 1880, 218; Macleane, 1893, 64; Wilks, 1930, vol. I, 52). That some if not all were indeed in the hills was confirmed by Finicio (1603).[9]

It has been argued that the respect shown to Badagas by the Todas and Kotas, for example in customary salutations, indicates that they had entered the Nilgiris while the Mysore kings were still in the ascendancy and had some territorial claims over the Nilgiris (Grigg, 1880, 218; see below, 112). The Be:da phratry, who arrived rather more recently as huntsmen and tax collectors in the retinue of the chieftain of Ummattu:r, 'still call the Mysore chiefs . . . their Kartas or lords' (Grigg, 1880, 268-269, quoting Metz, 1864). Such an argument does not accord with the widespread tale of flight from Moslem oppressors, which depicts some Badagas initially coming to the Nilgiri tribes with caps in hand:

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

'Because of the trouble that the Mohammedan made for us . . . we have come, making ourselves to escape. This country is yours . . . We are helpless. You must help us.' Such is the Kota version. In response a council of Todas, Kotas and Kurumbas allowed the Badagas to settle provided they paid the now-customary tribute to these tribes (Harkness, 1832, 106–107; Natesa Sastri, 1892, 735–754; Rhiem, 1900, 498; Emeneau, 1946, 257; see below, 113–116). Not all Badagas migrated within a generation or two, and while some may have been fleeing from Moslem soldiers other bands came later for other reasons.

Clearly there were several waves of immigrants brought sometimes by famine conditions, sometimes by Moslem attempts at forcible conversion, sometimes perhaps by a Mysorean policy to colonize the hills. The Kotas are explicit that once a few Badagas had arrived more came over the succeeding years (Belli Gowder, 1938–1941, 3; Emeneau, 1946, 259). The early explorers Ward (1821) and Harkness (1832) both recorded that the people had settled over many years, and Ward added that some had been 'invited' there by the chieftains of Ummattu:r, under whose suzerainty the Nilgiris had rested for a period. This story suggests that some Badagas, refugees from famine rather than Islam, had settled in the hills as part of a pacification programme aimed at increasing the revenue there.[10] Others, it is popularly believed, fled from Moslem rulers who wanted to marry or seduce good-looking Hindu girls. In search of refuge from this threat they travelled up to 150 km. On reaching the hills the women were given facial tattoos and dressed in white cloths (as they still are) to resemble Kota women, while men adopted the Toda shawl for greater warmth: in effect a conscious and lasting attempt was made to resemble the hill tribes and to adopt a tribal model of social organization.[11]

The early pattern of occupancy was one of scattered homesteads in widely separated parts of the plateau. These clusters of small wooden huts grew into lineage centres and so into villages, usually maintaining strict exogamy. Until the advent of *Pax Britannica* in the early nineteenth century, the houses were built around three sides of a plaza, with its open side facing downhill for defensive purposes. Today only De:na:du preserves that plan; the other villages, of which there are about 370, are made up of several parallel lines of houses running along a hillside. Traditionally the senior brother among the patrilineal descendants of the founder

615 Cinna Kunnu:r (on the northern edge of the Nilgiris). Traditionally these were the Wodeas of Maduve clan, who had previously been *Jangama* priests. When other Wodeas arrived from Tagadu:r they formed a separate clan called Ko:ve:ru, as they were of that sept. Yet other Wodeas came to the Nilgiris from a monastery at Saragu:r, and since that was a village in the former Hindu kingdom of Kongu this particular clan of Wodeas have ever since been nicknamed Kongaru ('Kongu people') by other Badagas. Later on, when Tippu's troops seized the Nilgiri fortress of Male Ko:te, an Ummattu:r outpost, the Wodeas who were dependent on its chiefs were reportedly left destitute, but they remained in the hills.[14]

● 194 197 The relative recency of this Wodea migration derives some support from Badagu dialectology. As I have mentioned, there are six dialects of the language, three of these seemingly distinctive by reason of geography: speakers living in the Kundena:du, Ha:sanu:ru and Wainad areas used to be quite isolated from the rest of the community, a situation that would encourage the growth of separate dialects in the course of several centuries. The distinction of Wodea and of Kumba:ra-Be:da from Standard Badagu cannot, however, be explained in geographic terms, for the Wodeas, Kumba:ras and Be:das live in and beside villages where Standard Badagu is spoken. Only by postulating that these three groups arrived speaking a more modern form of Kannada than the earlier immigrants who spoke a medieval variety can we account 615 for this disparity. Their own legend fully bears out this hypothesis: they claim to have all come to the hills together in the service of an Ummattu:r chieftain when the Gaudas had already arrived, the Wodeas as Lingayat priests, the Kumba:ras as palace servants, the Be:das as huntsmen and tribute collectors. Not only do the Wodeas claim descent from the royal house, however (Metz, 1864, 48-49; Grigg, 1880, 220; Natesa Sastri, 1892, 754-755); the Kumba:ras also maintain they 'belonged to' the ruling family of Chamaraj Wodeya, though they probably had a servile rather than a kin relationship, particularly as this phratry is Shaivite (not Lingayat), while the royal family has been Vaishnavite since 1610. 192 198 The fact that the Wodeas have a dialect distinct from Kumba:ra-Be:da is to be explained by class distinctions. As in many parts of India the orthodox, vegetarian, high-status Woderu priests spoke differently from the low status, meat-eating servants of the chieftain for the two did not intermarry or mix socially.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

614 who started it was Jambuliṅgayya, secretary of the chieftain Bijjanarasu. He had two wives whose descendants occupied upper and lower Ka:te:ri; and later generations from each of these areas founded other Kaṇakka villages, as indicated in Diagram 3.

Both the Kaṇakkas and the Adikiris began to intermarry with Ha:ruvas soon after settling in the hills; Adikiris also married Gauda women, while Kaṇakkas intermarried with Kaggusis and Koṅgaru. This step was forced on these Lingayat clans by a shortage of girls in their own community at that time: properly they should only have married other Lingayats.

KAGGUSIS

These people originated in Tagadu:r, from whose monastery they left as a band of refugee *Jaṅgamas* or monks; one clan of Wodeas had an identical origin. They first settled at the village of Kaggusi, and there left off wearing *liṅgas* because of the necessity to marry with Gauda women and the pollution of their *liṅgas* that would follow as a consequence. Later they spread out to establish or occupy another six villages; but on the occasion of a severe drought some retreated from Kaggusi to the low-lands and founded a village near Ha:sanu:ru, where they still live.

GAUDAS

615 Not only are there ten times as many Gaudas as members of any other phratry: their legendary history is proportionately more complex than any other.

Three facts are relevant to a dating of their arrival. The Gaudas themselves claim to have reached the Nilgiris before any other group, and the Lingayats and Ha:ruvas confirm that their ancestors found Gaudas there when they arrived. Secondly, their paramount chief, living at Tu:ne:ri, can number nineteen generations of ancestors, which would put their arrival back to the sixteenth if not the fifteenth century. Thirdly, we may recall (174) that Finicio saw Badagas at the village of Melcuntaõ in 1603. Assuming this was the Gauda village of Me:lkunda—and no other village offers a closer identification than this—we deduce that at least a part of the Gauda population had immigrated a century or

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

615 two before the Kumba:ra, Be:da and various Lingayat groupings.

●[174] This accords with a Badaga tradition that the very first group of migrants were three brothers of the Kasturi sept or clan, who came from Ka:rahaḷḷi and settled in the Ke:ti Valley, Kundena:ḍu and 173 Cinna Kunnu:r.[22] Later the eastern half of the plateau was settled by seven brothers, their sister and her husband. Later still yet other Gaudas went to Todana:ḍu and Me:kuna:ḍu divisions.

615 614 It is not impossible that the Kasturi Gaudas had the same Virashaiva origins as the Adikiris or Wodeas. Some hold the belief that they were at first vegetarians and Lingayats. As so often happened in legendary times a Kasturi tasted meat, for which his daughter made him give up his *liṅga* to her husband, a Lingayat Adikiri. Thereafter the Kasturis intermarried mainly with other Gaudas.[23] A comparable story maintains that some Gaudas of Neḍugula are descended from 'Kongaru', Wodeas of Selandi clan, after some fell away from their phratry's principles and were denied *liṅgas* when one of their youths ate meat to please a Gauda girl whom he loved.[24]

Kasturi ('musk'), we may note, is also the name of a sept among the Kanarese Okkaligas. (Thurston, 1909, Vol. I, 75, and Vol. III, 615 256; see below, p. 79). This too reflects the Gaudas' origin, (especially as many Badagas at the 1891 census enumeration gave their caste as Okkaliga).[25] Today, few Badagas agree to a connexion with the Okkaliga community, conceivably because there are now hundreds of poor Okkaligas on the Nilgiri Plateau, recent immigrants who work as labourers and with whom Badagas do not associate except as employers and landlords. A more likely explanation, however, is that enumerators in 1891 failed to discover that *okkaliga* merely means 'permanent resident' in Baḍagu and is not a clan or caste designation among them. Nonetheless there are informants in the Nilgiris and Ha:sanu:ru who agree to an origin among the Okkaligas of Mysore; and both communities share the same rather distinctive personal names.

There is an ancient settlement of Okkaligas in the Coimbatore Plain, for example at the village of Nellitore from which the Adikiris ascended the Nilgiri slopes. The legend of how they got to Neḷḷitore is worth recounting.

(539) ...Tippu Sultan wanted to marry an Okkaliga bride. The Okkaligas consented to it at first due to fear of the fanatic king, but subsequently decided to run away. So they dressed up a dog

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

NOTES

1. See Ward, 1821, lxx. *Baḍaga* is pronounced with stress on the first syllable.
2. They do not intermarry with other Badagas but find spouses either within their own phratry or from castes also called Kumba:ras and Be:das in southern Mysore.
3. The first European to write of Badagas was St. Francis Xavier, who in 1542–1544 described them as a 'horde of plundering ruffians', 'bloodthirsty horsemen' and 'savage brigands'; see Coleridge, 1872, vol. I, 218, 234–235. These people are said to have been royal tax gatherers in Travancore, where they bore the name Badagas or Vadhougers because of their northern origin. They greatly oppressed St. Francis' converts among the Travancore fisherfolk; Coleridge, 1872, vol. I, *passim*, and Thurston, 1909, vol. VII, 266. Elsewhere they are stated to have come from Vijayanagar; see Maffei, 1589, vol. I, pt. 4, 431; Bertrand, 1848, vol. II, 2; Coleridge, 1872, vol. I, 219, n. 12. It seems unlikely that they had any connexion with the Nilgiri Badagas, especially as some authorities consider them Telugu speakers; see Bertrand, 1848, vol. II, 2, n. 1; Grigg, 1880, 219; Natesa Sastri, 1892, 830–831.
4. India now has about four million Lingayats; except for the Districts of Kolhapur (Maharashtra), Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Coimbatore and the Nilgiris they are found solely within Karnataka State.
5. Belli Gowder was a Badaga antiquarian; in his unpublished notes he mistakenly took this date for 1212; Belli Gowder, 1938–1941, 5.
6. Francis, 1908, 129; his claim that Baḍagu has *beṭṭa* for modern Kannada *beṭṭu* ('hill') is incorrect: the reverse would be true.
7. Congreve, 1847, 96–98; Grigg, 1880, 243; Sewell, 1882, 226. There is a grant of A.D. 1120 stating that Vishhuvardhana, the first Hoysaja king, 'turned the Nila mountain into a city'; Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 92. The Toda name for the area is *pin tïj*, 'gold mountain'; Francis, 1908, 357.
8. Belli Gowder, 1923–1941, 24–26; and 1938–1941, 5–6. It was the grandfather of Tu:ne:ri's founder who migrated from Mysore, at about the time the Vijayanagar Empire was destroyed.
9. He reports three 'villages' but there may have been more at the time, especially if the word *u:r* ('commune') has been incorrectly translated as 'village' or if other settlers later considered Badagas were not then treated as such or were not known of in that part of the plateau. An inscription on a dolmen at Me:lu:ru relating to a tiger and a grant bears the Śa:ka date 1518 (A.D. 1596), but since it is in Tamil it perhaps has nothing to do with the Badagas; Breeks, 1873, 102–103; Grigg, 1880, 240. Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 100, disagrees with this view; he believes the dolmen to have been erected more recently by two Gaundans.
10. Ward, 1821, lxx-lxxi; Harkness, 1832, 109. Certain villages still claim to have been founded by an official from Ummattu:r.
11. Benbow, 1930, 1–3; Karl, 1945, 1. A reference to the Mysorean practice of wearing a *sa:ri* is to be found in the funeral symbolism, wherein a female corpse is offered a piece of coloured cloth *(basva)*. Legend maintains that when the seven brothers of Maduve clan were fleeing from Mysore they left behind a baby slung from the rafters in a *sa:ri*. In token of their grief the women never more used *sa:ris* or cradles after settling in the Nilgiris.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

175 succeeded in adapting to their new social and geographic environment. We may presume that natural selection helped the population build up a genetic resistance to whatever montane illnesses had not previously affected the people when they were living in Mysore and that some lowland disease organisms were no longer able to survive at the new elevation, either because it was too high and cold for them or because the hosts among the scattered and tiny population died off without transferring these organisms to new hosts, or more probably because the population density was so low that, after one infection by any particular disease organism, antibodies were built up that protected all Badagas from any further infection in the near future. As the settlements expanded, the increasing numbers of people permitted greater transference of disease organisms and called for greater amounts of health care; but at the same time these settlements, located in most parts of the Nilgiri Plateau within a zone that lay between 1,200m and 2,200m feet elevation, gave people opportunities to select the more healthy residential sites, to explore micro-environmental differences in the area and most importantly to discover medicinal uses for dozens of new species of plants that were in many instances confined to the Plateau. We may presume that the pharmacological uses of local plants were discovered by Badaga women who worked as goatherds and closely observed the feeding habits of their animals. While it is true that Badagas do not keep goats today, they did so during the seventeenth century and later too.

175 After contact with the British a new equilibrium with their changed environment was achieved by the Badagas, and their 179 population was able to increase rapidly for several decades while 184 there was still a very low density of population. Why? One relevant factor, I would hypothesise, was that a change in their drinking habits followed the arrival of the British (from 1819 onward) and that this was associated with greater resistance to bacteria in the [272] drinking water. The main drinks of the community at the time [273] were fresh milk and stream water. Yet by the 1840s arrack, a locally made liquor, as well as tea and coffee, were common Badaga preferences. Other cultural practices confined infectious bacteria to relatively limited areas. Buffalo dung tended to collect [514] in the stone kraals built just outside the villages. Similarly, indiscriminate spitting was not tolerated and spittoons were consequently in common use. A proverb stressed that, 'If you ask for an obligation it is essential to see the right people; it is essential

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

and eighteenth centuries when the total Badaga population was no more than one or two thousand people, and their density of settlement only about five to ten people per square mile, it might even have taken several generations before a wooden hut or cluster of huts would have become sufficiently well known to the neighbours living some kilometers away to merit the acquisition of a site-name. 'The name of a village ... depends for its existence upon the people in the neighbouring villages, not upon those who live in it: the latter are usually content in conversation to refer to it as "here" or "home" or "this village" as distinct from other places. It is the size of the area or population throughout which a place-name is accepted as an identificatory label that determines its persistence and permanence.' (Wainwright, 1962, 58)

As one might expect, not all of the early Badaga settlements did persist. Legend records the names of several dozen that are no longer to be found. Best remembered perhaps is the commune of Tu:du:ru (× tu:de + u:ru = hill mango + head village), which once consisted of nineteen hamlets.[4] 'Tradition says that the Badagas left these places and founded Athikarihatti and its hamlets instead, because the Kurumbas round about continually troubled them with their magic arts and indeed killed by sorcery several of their most prominent citizens (Francis, 1908, 316). A perhaps soberer reason for the abandonment, offered by modern informants, is that the population of all nineteen hamlets was decimated by an epidemic disease some 150 or 200 years ago.[5] Scattered elsewhere across the plateau were several other abandoned hamlets, among them Neddilu, Moritore, Billimale, Edeyu:ru, and a number clustered together on land that has since been bought up by large tea plantations on the southeastern edge of the plateau, around Hulikal.[6]

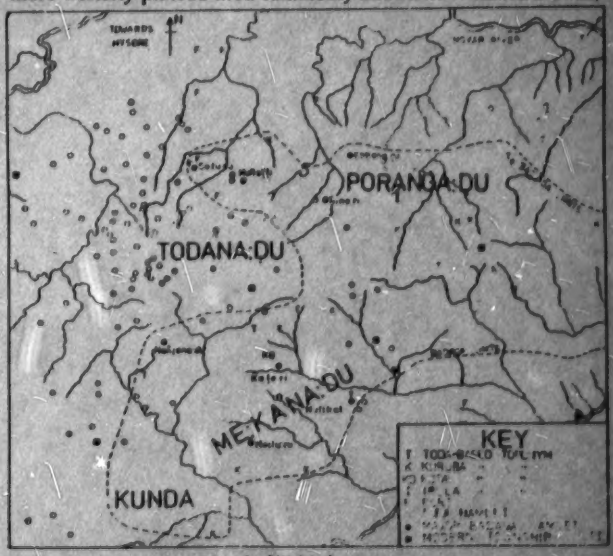
It appears that during the early phase of their settlement the Badagas came into frequent contact with Todas and Kurumbas and took over a number of sites from both tribes. The unique instances of toponyms referring to Kotas and Irulas (?) suggest that these tribes, by contrast, were insignificant and perhaps not very numerous on the plateau. The Kotas today occupy only six villages there, and the Irulas fewer yet.

The question naturally arises as to how the refugees were able to displace Toda and Kurumba homes. Local tradition offers only a partial answer. As we have seen, it is recorded in Kota folklore that when the first Badaga refugees reached the Nilgiris, they met

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

with a council from the three resident tribes: 'Because of the trouble that the Mohammedan made for us we have come, making ourselves to escape. This country is yours. We are helpless. You must help us.' (Emeneau, 1946, 257; cf. Ouchterlony, 1848, 81) The Toda sites they were given may have been uninhabited religious centers and unoccupied hamlets belonging previously to Toda clans that had died out.[7] The Kurumba sites were more probably relinquished to the Badagas only after the latter had committed some atrocities against the Kurumba sorcerers alleged to live in them. The burning of Kurumba hamlets was certainly a fairly common act of frightened Badagas during the nineteenth century, and numerous instances of it have been recorded by contemporary writers.

As an effect of the peaceful Badaga incursion, we can now identify with the help of a map (Map 3) some micro-environmental differences in the settlement patterns of Badagas, Todas and Kurumbas. The Todas now occupy the higher and more westerly plateau area commonly known as Wenlock Downs,



Map 3 Nilgiri place-names

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

615 support for his high rank. Many also maintain that the Wodeas were descended from ancient Virashaiva Lingayats, reached the Nilgiris before any other Lingayats and came as priests, for which reasons too they deserve primacy.

178 Nobody disputes with the Christians or the Toreas for their lowly
615 position, not even the Kota tribe who find themselves ranked lower still. On the other hand there is a movement now afoot to accord the Ha:ruvas higher status than the Wodeas: this springs from the minority who support a pro-Ha:ruva and pro-music faction. The mechanics of upward mobility for Ha:ruvas, a vegetarian group since its inception, have been to abrogate marital links with lower clans. The Ha:ruvas may marry Gaudas (non-vegetarians), Kohgaru (vegetarians), Kaṇakkas and Adikiris (both Lingayat vegetarians). At present the frequency of marriage with Gaudas is decreasing noticeably, so that the Ha:ruvas are shifting away from their lower-status affines while becoming more closely linked by marriage with the Lingayats, though not adopting Lingayat religious practices themselves.

114 Recently Mandelbaum (1970, 20) has described the Badagas as
121 a *jati*-cluster. It is true that the units often identified as subcastes are now thought to constitute a hierarchy; but *none* of the ten is
615 totally endogamous like a *jati*. Hypogamous marriages occur as often as hypergamous ones, a state of affairs not found between
544 *jatis*, especially as marriage may take place between vegetarian
[582] and non-vegetarian Badagas. The ceremonial and economic links that one expects between *jatis* are of no consequence here except at the top of the hierarchy: Wodeas and Ha:ruvas do have attenuated ritual roles to play for the rest of the community, though over the past forty years these have been almost abandoned. Such linkages between the groupings are slight as compared with the economic and ceremonial ties between any Badaga village and its nearest Kota neighbour. These facts do not really justify calling the Badaga community a hierarchy or cluster of *jatis*: the concept of *jati* is unnecessary to this analysis. Phratry is the usual word by which anthropologists identify a grouping of clans, and there is no need to depart from that form here, especially as by doing so we might conjure up ideas of multi-caste villages, *jati* endogamy and *jati* occupational specialization which find no place in Badaga social organization although they are widespread in India.

● 114 M.N. Srinivas (personal comment, 1965) is probably right in suggesting, however, that at some point in the past, perhaps a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

couple of centuries ago, the Badagas adopted a caste model of society (or revived memories of the old Mysorean one) and attempted with only moderate success to fit their collection of lineages to it: indeed this perhaps was the act of synoecism. The inadequate fit that they achieved is reflected both in recent shifts in the ranking and in the ambiguous position that the claim to Brahminic status has brought to the Ha:ruvas. This group long ago adopted the 'sacred' thread,[5] a vegetarian diet and the role of priests, but they have no initiation ceremony, no *śra:ddha* for the dead and—having been illiterate—no Sanskrit or other holy writings. In the mid-nineteenth century they were still quite ignorant of Hindu scriptures, (B.E.M.S., 1867, no. 28, 73). They now find themselves caught between two models, as it were, for while they are trying to develop the image of orthodox Brahmins other Badagas find that model much less appealing then a new westernizing model upheld by Christians and by the large, dominant Gauda phratry, a model that displaced their older tribal model nearly a century ago. A more general ambiguity is expressed by shifts in the ranking of the hierarchy as certain Badagas attempt to achieve a more convincing accord between recently learnt Brahminic ideals and local needs. Since the Badagas have shown little willingness to modify the customary marriage patterns they are obliged to accept the anomaly of a hierarchy relevant only for ritual and not for marriage purposes: this sets them off from the usual model of caste society in which the units of the hierarchy are clearly delineated by marriage rules.

Another explanation for the lack of concern about status congruence when a marriage is being arranged is that the social status of a young girl is determined by the village where she lives. Girls before puberty are for many purposes treated as children of the entire village rather than of one particular family. Once a girl has attained menarche (in earlier days, before that) she should be married into another village, where she becomes identified with her husband's family and where her status is determined only by the clan and the affluence of that family, never by her own father's. The same attitude towards women is clearly reflected in the kinship system, where only the males' generation level is important in determining relationships. The generation level of a woman is that of her husband and can actually change as she marries successive husbands from different generations.[6] Though a cross-cousin is preferred, a Badaga may marry women, either

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

plateau, from 1807,[17] were too demanding of the dues they had paid the East India Company for the privilege of collecting, while in some other years the commune headmen were too slack about the collection. The drought of 1805–1807, the general shortage of coin, the after-effects of Tippu's plundering of Badaga villages, all perhaps contributed to the decline in the payments, if not the fortunes, of the Badagas at this period.

Despite the British policy of fixing grain prices they did show fluctuations from year to year. Sarada Raju's excellent study of economic conditions in Madras Presidency during the first half of the nineteenth century clarifies these fluctuations. He does not offer specific data for Coimbatore District (which then included the Nilgiris); nevertheless he is surely justified in his view that on a long-term basis the trend was similar in all districts (Sarada Raju, 1941, 227). As his statistical data for the Presidency adequately confirm (1941, 228–230),

> ... prices were high in the first few years of the nineteenth century. The country had just emerged from a protracted period of war and anarchy during which rival armies and plundering bands had laid whole districts desolate. Cultivators who had fled to the jungles and hills were but gradually returning to their neglected fields.... The period was also marked by a number of scarcities, more or less severe. The very first year, 1799–1800, witnessed a severe dearth and again between 1805 and 1807 occurred another famine, when prices ruled very high. After this prices were persistently low ... from 1807–8 to 1850–51 prices rose above the [economic analyst's] base only on seven occasions; and these were famine years.
>
> When the pendulum swung back, low prices ruled till 1812, when two dry seasons caused a scarcity which lasted till 1813–14. But with the coming of the rains, a lower level was reached and we hear frequent complaints of the "continued low price of grain".... All the Collectors remarked about it, affecting as it did the ryots' [peasants'] ability to pay the revenue (Sarada Raju, 1941, 231–232).[18]

While several seasons of adverse weather mentioned by Sarada Raju did give rise to famine conditions in Coimbatore District, which was one of the driest in the Presidency, it is very unlikely that famine also occurred on the Nilgiri Plateau at those times.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

174 435 438 Because of their wetter climate the Badagas have always been able to subsist while famine ravaged the South Indian plains (Grigg, 1880, 34). Even so, Badagas were undoubtedly affected by the occasional lowland famines and by fluctuations in the grain prices, since they sold their grain surplus in the nearby lowland markets. We need hardly point out that they would have made unusually good profits from sales in the famine years, but they might also have been taxed more heavily in those years.

MARKETING AFTER 1825

174 366 (177) Around the year 1825 the British settlers, through their officials in Ootacamund, began to encourage traders from the plains to develop a market in that town and provided government-owned land for the purpose (Price, 1908, 233). By the end of 1827,

> ...advances had been made to [immigrant] natives to open bazaars...in the place so that 'the market is now well and regularly supplied with every essential article'...a public establishment of palanquin-bearers was kept up; and...villages were beginning to spring up at the foot of the passes (Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 115; compare Grigg, 1880, 288).

174 439 The traders in those early days were Chettis from Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya, Ka:ramuḍu and other nearby lowland villages.[19] The market in Ootacamund was held only on Monday and Tuesday of each week; every Thursday the same traders held a market in Sirumuge, and on Friday were in Ka:ramuḍu. In these places they would collect the produce from the surrounding Chetti-controlled villages, then on Friday night they would start out by bullock-cart up the long Coonoor pass to the plateau. Their merchandise included rice, salt, crude sugar, coconut and other foodstuffs[20] As the climb was entirely uphill the bullocks rested all day Saturday and Sunday on the slopes and travelled throughout the nights. Later on in the century wealthy Chettis built some free rest-houses by the roadside for these journeys. The carts regularly reached Ootacamund on Sunday evening after a forty-eight hour haul. After two days of trading the Chettis left with their loaded carts around four each Tuesday afternoon. By Friday morning they were back in Ka:ramuḍu to repeat the weekly cycle and to barter

21 Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

their Nilgiri acquisitions for further produce to take up to the hills.

According to modern Badaga informants their forebears did not use cash at the Ootacamund market during the first two decades of its existence. They exchanged the products of their own lands for the foodstuffs brought up by Chettis. In this way the Nilgiri Plateau was exporting a variety of goods to Ka:ramuḍu and its environs, especially clarified butter, onions, honey, coriander, opium and millet hay.

The initial period of barter in the bazaar passed as the town acquired a few regular shops. Later in the nineteenth century coinage came into use in the market, now open every day, and a government superintendent fixed the day's prices (Ouchterlony, 1848, 72; Price, 1908, 187). One could even borrow money there at 2 or 3% per month interest (depending on the security). Monday and Tuesday in Ootacamund, Thursday in Sirumuge, Friday in Ka:ramuḍu and Saturday in Me:ṯṯupa:ḷaya are however still called 'shandy days',[21] and it is still customary for Badagas to visit the Nilgiri towns on Monday, their weekly holiday, and to send truckloads of farm produce to Me:ṯṯupa:ḷaya or to Ka:ramuḍu each Friday. The transition to exclusive use of coinage in the market took a very long time, for as recently as 1924 Gaymard was able to remark that when they made their weekly trips to town some Badagas did not carry a purse but instead a basket or sackful of grain which they would exchange there for salt, pimentos, utensils and cloth (Gaymard, 1924, 2-3).

ITINERANT TRADERS ON THE PLATEAU

Both before and after these town bazaars were established the Badagas maintained another kind of link with the lowland economy. Chettis from villages lying directly east of the Nilgiris used to (and still do) come up onto the plateau once a month on foot for petty trading. Badagas call them Regional Chettis *(ṇa:ḍu cetti)*, in reference perhaps to the restricted range of each man's trading itinerary. Although living in a Tamil-speaking area their native tongue is Kannada. Their settlements in and near the towns of Sirumuge, Me:ṯṯupa:ḷaya and Ka:ramuḍu are concerned with petty trade, weaving and agriculture. The Chetti and his family weave cloth in their home for the Badagas; and until the advent of the Ootacamund bazaar they were the regular source for cloth

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

8

Administration and Law

CUSTOMARY LAW

Until the end of the last century the Indian Penal Code and the British system of local administration had little relevance to Badagas. They had their own uncodified law and their own headmen and councils to administer it.

Three periods are distinguishable in their legal history: one prior to the advent of the British when something akin to *lex talionis* was operative; a second period when Badagas still had full control of their legal procedure but operated it under the aegis of the British; and a third period, from about 1900 to the present, when litigants played off the Badaga system against the magistrate's court in an attempt to win cases through obscuration.

There are no records for the phase of *lex talionis*, but a rough account of the procedure is provided by legend. A village council sat in judgment and stipulated a time and place for punishment of the guilty. The man who had assaulted someone was to be kicked or beaten by him, the rapist had to offer his wife to the aggrieved husband, and the murderer was hanged by the family of his victim.

By the start of the nineteenth century this pattern had given way to one that is with some modification still in effect today. It originated before coinage was circulating in the Nilgiris, for the earliest fines, as among the Todas, were paid in buffaloes and not rupees. Although there are no written records the procedure can be described in detail because of its recency.

[p. 169]

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AN50 Badaga AN50

121 A ritual is not a network, but it is a medium of communication and provides an occasion for the personnel of all the networks of the village to converge in one place and act out their public roles. Ceremonial events are thus events of communication in two distinct senses. First, the confluence of people allows many local information networks to be reactivated; someone asks about getting a loan, another seeks opinions on a land dispute, a third takes a look at some potential brides. Second, the ritual itself conveys information to the participants. As we shall demonstrate, this message is a dramatization of the idea that the community is stable and its future assured.

231 (101) The Todas, Kotas, and Badagas, three communities on the Nilgiri Plateau[1] in Southern India, are all cattle-keepers. For the Todas buffalo herding is the major occupation; for the Badagas it is subsidiary to agriculture; and for the Kotas it is subsidiary to both agriculture and a variety of traditional handicrafts. Each of these groups now keeps cattle only for their milk products, though until several decades ago the Badagas and Kotas also used oxen for drawing their ploughs.[2] Each group gives salt to its herds once or more a year and each culture has a complex ceremonial for feeding the salt to the cattle.

121 (820) (232) (824) Confining ourselves to the Badagas,[3] we now ask a question that would in fact be equally pertinent to the case of the Todas or the Kotas: why is the giving of salt a day-long ceremony instead of merely a routine act of animal husbandry? Why are so many people and so much time involved in what a single boy could do in half an hour? The Badagas themselves would answer this question by invoking the "force of tradition"; but surely tradition is not *per se* an adequate explanation for the persistence of such a ceremony. The Badagas also maintain what is to them a perfectly rational explanation for the act of giving salt to their cattle. After heavy rains the young grass "tastes saltless," and the herds graze unenthusiastically; their owners make up this dietary deficiency by giving salt to the animals. The explanation suggests that these people understand something of the leaching process, but it certainly does not answer our original question: why has the act of salt-giving become a major annual ceremony?

231 796 Salt is regularly given to the cattle in March and at the end of December; in years when the grass is "saltless" a third dosage is given, generally in the month of June. On all three occasions the salt is given to the animals on a Monday, the weekly holiday of the Badagas, but it is only in March that the event is treated ceremonially.[4]

• 179 173 In the various writings abut the Badagas during the past 150 years there are only two brief references (Benbow 1928: 32-33; Karl 1945: 17), both fairly recent, to this salt-giving ceremony. Nevertheless it seems certain that the ceremony has a considerable antiquity; the comparable Toda ceremony was mentioned by Father Finicio in 1603 (Rivers 1906: 726). The Badagas did not become literate until the present century, yet they have an extensive and generally credible body of orally transmitted history relating to their way of life in the days shortly before the British settled in the Nilgiri Hills (i.e., prior to 1820). These Badaga accounts are explicit about

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
ANSO Badaga ANSO

salt being one of the few items that the hill people used to carry up from market towns on the plains during their annual trading expeditions.[5] We may perhaps infer that the salt-giving was already a ceremony from the tradition that the men in these parties who were carrying salt specifically to give to their buffaloes were supposed to keep themselves in a ritually pure state, and were not allowed to carry any other trade items at the same time. One man would therefore carry salt for a number of men in the trading party, and they in turn would carry his purchases. Salt intended for domestic use was never treated with such reverence. Once a market had been established in the new British hill town of Ootacamund, *ca.* 1825, these old trading expeditions fell into abeyance because the Badagas could then purchase salt without having to leave the hills.[6]

The annual ceremony of giving "new-grass salt," called *'ku:ruppu,* is performed separately by each hamlet in March of every year, on the Monday that falls within the eight days following the new moon. At about the time of the new moon itself one man is selected from every household in each hamlet to represent that family; generally the head of the family assumes the role, unless the purificatory preparations are too burdensome for him.

Early in the morning of the ceremony, after the house has been purified, each of these men goes out to his cattle shed and brings in the salt he has purchased. This coarse salt is then powdered in a mortar inside the house with a special iron bar supplied by the Kota craftsmen.

At the appropriate time the hamlet headman comes along each street calling out, "Are you ready?" Each celebrant then picks up his powdered salt in its basket[7] and stands near the doorway. At a signal from the headman, the man who represents the Great House (i.e., that of the hamlet's founding family) is the first to leave his doorway. He goes and stands on the village green, and all of the other men selected immediately come out and line up behind him. They then start off for the stream where the salt-feeding will take place. The man from the Great House stays in the lead. At some distance behind this party of celebrants other members of their families follow, driving the cattle or just coming along to watch; but no women can be present.

This group goes to the bank of a stream near the hamlet, carrying their baskets of salt, iron rods, pots, and hoes. Near the stream the man from the Great House digs a shallow, round hole with his hoe, two to three feet wide and a foot deep. The other men then follow suit, each using his own hoe to dig a hole for his own cattle. During the present century, however, the Badaga cattle herds have become much smaller than before, and so only one man from each lineage is usually selected to dig a pit for all the cattle belonging to that lineage. (Generally a Badaga hamlet is made up of three or four lineages, one at least of which is recognized as having descended from the hamlet founder.) After each of these pits has been dug, the loose dirt in it is brushed out with a branch of the *'kubbe* plant.[8]

The sun is now in the east, for it is still morning. When the pits have been dug, the man from the Great House takes a handful of salt from his

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

one aspect of their presumed "familiarity with learning," if we may call it that, they gained a reputation as exorcists and curers. Today some among the couple of thousand Kaṇakkas still practise these crafts, although they no longer hold a monopoly among the Badagas. (My chief medical informant, K. Sithamma, was born in a Kaṇakka family in 1891.)

1.6. During the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries the Badaga community increased from a reported three villages in 1603 to nearly 370 villages a century ago. This expansion, marking the second phase, encompassed some developments of importance to the history of Badaga therapy. The community was faced with the problem of adapting to a new geographic and social environment, and clearly succeeded in doing so. We may presume that natural selection helped the population build up a genetic resistance to whatever montane illnesses had not previously affected the people when they were living in Mysore; and that some lowland disease organisms were no longer able to survive at the new elevation, either because it was too high and cold for their animal hosts, or else because the hosts among the scattered and tiny human population died off without transferring these organisms to new hosts, or more probably because when the density of population was very low infection by particular diseases summoned forth antibodies or other disease-resistant aptitudes, which protected their descendants from any further infection by those diseases. As the settlements expanded the increasing numbers of people permitted greater transference of disease organisms and called for greater amounts of health care; but at the same time these settlements, located in most parts of the Nilgiri Massif within a zone that lay between 4000 and 7300 feet of elevation, gave people opportunities to select the more healthy residential sites, to explore the micro-environmental differences in the area, and most importantly to discover medicinal uses for dozens of new species of plants that were in many instances confined to the Massif (see Trilingual Index). We may presume that the pharmacological uses of local plants were discovered by Badaga women who worked as goatherds and men working as cowherds, by closely observing the feeding habits of their animals. Geza Roheim has made a similar observation on the control that Australian Aboriginal women have over the medicinal use of plants which they are responsible for gathering. While it is true that Badagas did not keep

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

goats recently, they did so during the seventeenth century and even later (Finicio 1603: 723; Birch 1838:103).

1.7. After contact with the British a new adjustment with their changed environment was achieved by the Badagas, and their population was able to increase rapidly for several decades while there was still a very low density of population. One relevant factor, I would hypothesize, was that a change in their drinking habits followed the arrival of the British (from 1819 onward), and that this was associated with greater resistance to bacteria in the drinking water. The main drinks of the community at the time were fresh milk and stream water: "...at midday, or towards evening, parties of them are often to be seen seated on the bank of some brook or rill, partaking of their simple fare, which generally consists of barley or other meal, mixed up with some of the pure element that is gurgling past them, a little salt, and a little chilly" (Harkness 1832: 111; so also Young 1827: 42, Birch 1838:103, and Dulles 1835: 465-66). Two British officials, one a surgeon, make it clear that until the 1830s the Badagas had no alcohol, and "drunkenness is unknown here" (Macpherson 1820: lix; Ainslie 1834: 36). But the surgeon had already in 1829 recorded that he had "tasted very tolerable specimens of beer which had been brewed on these hills from malt of Native Manufacture" (Price 1908: 218). Within another two decades a staggering change had come about:

> Lord Tweeddale...in 1847,...stated that he had never anywhere seen such widespread and continuous drunkenness amongst low-class natives as prevailed there [the Nilgiri town of Ootacamund], not only in the case of those resident, but also in that of peons, followers, and servants, brought up from Madras and other places. The drink at this time available was...arrack, which ...was not very expensive. (Price 1908: 51)

This drunkenness was more of an urban than a rural phenomenon, although some Badagas did go to the town to indulge themselves. Meanwhile, at the same time that beer and arrack were becoming available, so were tea and coffee. These hot drinks were generally preferred by the Badagas to stream water, because of the cool climate, even though they had a religious tabu against heating milk (Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 247). In this latter regard, I was told that if one keeps milk in a warm place it will "boil up" of its own accord

631 District has been divided.

The Inhabitants of the Nilgiris

000 An inscription at Chamrajnagar (near Mysore), dated to 1117 A.D., claims that a Hoysala minister entered the Nilgiris and "frightened the Todas" (Derrett 1957: 47). In 1124 another petty ruler attacked Kulkala, which is perhaps a Kota settlement (kôkîl in the Kota language) on the Nilgiri Plateau (Derrett 1957: 60). These two dates provide a terminus ante quem for the settlement of the Toda and perhaps the Kota tribes on the hills.

175 177 In 1602 or 1603 a Portuguese priest visited the plateau -- the first European known to have done so -- and reported in a letter to his superior on his encounters with the Todas and Badagas (Fenicio 1603). And although the jungle tribes of Kurumbas and Irulas are not mentioned in any source prior to Buchanan's report of 1807, there is no ethno-historical reason to suppose that they have not also been in the Nilgiris for at least as long as the Badagas.

• 174

The whole question of the origins of these tribes is undemonstrable archaeologically and quite irrelevant to this study. There is however very strong evidence to support the common belief that the Badagas were not originally a tribe at all (in the popular usage of that word), but rather were descendants of various wanderers or refugees from the old kingdom of Mysore who settled down in the Nilgiris during the period 1400-1800, and were thereby obliged through social pressures to behave like a tribe amongst tribes. The nature of this "tribalization" process will be discussed in the following chapter. Both their origin in Mysore and their complex contacts with the indigenous Nilgiri tribes have molded Badaga culture and social organization markedly. The Badagas still 197 speak a dialect of the Kannada language; whereas the Todas and Kotas each have

000 In 1951 the total population of the District numbered 311,729; and by 1961 it had risen to 409,308 — a massive increase of 32% in a decade, attributable to the high rate of local immigration as well as to the increase of births over deaths.

177 In summary, therefore, while the Todas, Kotas, Kurumbas and Irulas are all tiny communities when compared with the numbers of Badagas, the Badagas in turn are now greatly outnumbered by settlers who have recently arrived from all parts of the Southern Indian plains.

The Badagas

161 Until the recent influx of these laborers, the Badagas were the preponderant community in the Nilgiris. Today they number a little under 100,000, and occupy nearly 400 hamlets dotted across the District.

101 The word Badaga (more correctly Baḍaga) means "Northerner" in their dialect of the Kannaḍa language, and was presumably first used as a name for them when they became an immigrant community among the tribal groups already 174 established in the Nilgiri Hills. Their origin is clearly traceable to the plains of Southern Mysore, which lie just to the north of the Nilgiris. Badaga traditions indicate that they arrived as small parties of refugees over a period of several hundred years. Because some of the earliest of these settlers were of the Lingayat faith when they arrived it is only reasonable to suppose that they left Mysore after the founding of the Lingayat sect ca. 1160 A.D. That there were a few Badaga villages in the hills by the year 1602 is known from the account of the Nilgiris sent to his superior by Father Fenicio (Fenicio 1603). But as many Badagas still speak about their ancestors having fled from the terrors of Tippu Sultan's reign in Mysore (1786-1799), there is also good ground for supposing that the last of the Badaga migrants did not reach the Nilgiris until the end of the 18th Century

115
167

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1909
(1800-1963)
AW50 Badaga AW50
Toda AW60

CHAPTER III

PASTORALISTS AND GRASSLANDS

B 121

The occupance patterns described in this chapter are related to Toda, Badaga, Badaga-Kasuva, and Kota pastoralism associated with temperate grassland, tropical savanna, or subtropical savanna formation. Todas, who herd only buffaloes, established hamlets, dairy-temple centers, and cremation centers on the temperate upper Nilgiris. They also started transhumance in which buffaloes are moved westward in the dry season and eastward before westerly monsoon rains start.

T 361

T 174

Distinctive Toda dwellings and temples, forming types, are indicators of an ancient culture. Ancestral Todas may have domesticated buffaloes in the distant past. Clarified butter production in dwellings and dairy-temples has long been their essential economic activity.

T 234 177

Continued acculturation in this century has resulted in some Todas turning to cash income through milk sales and agriculture.

B 174

According to folklore, ancestral Badagas came to the Nilgiris after fleeing persecution from Moslems in Mysore. Several migrations may have occurred after approximately 1200 A.D. On the upper Nilgiris the enterprising Badagas, who are the leading agriculturists, apparently learned to exploit temperate grasslands by borrowing ideas from Todas. The Bergani dairy-temple center, sacred buffalo herd, and ritual to ensure Badaga prosperity may be somewhat equated with Toda dairy-temple centers, sacred buffaloes, and ritual to ensure Toda

B T 171

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)
AN50 Badaga AN50
Kota AN55
Kurumba AN56
Toda AN60
Madras Tribes AN63
Kasuva

NOTES

[1]The trend had started by 1905 (Rivers 1906: 23-24).

[2]A Toda green funeral ends with the deceased's cremation. Relics of the deceased, such as hair and portions of the skull, are kept for the second dry funeral. Ritual performed over the relics in a dry funeral resembles ritual used in the green funeral, and the relics are finally burned in an azaram. Kotas also have green and dry funerals. In contrast to Todas, the dry funeral honors all who have died during a year. Thus, on a set date, funeral ritual is performed over the relics of Kota community members who have died since the last dry funeral.

[3]For convenience, the terms used by Rivers (1906) are adhered to in this section pertaining to Todas. For information regarding ritual and uses of the two fireplaces in the Nôdr dairy-temple, see Rivers 1906: 91-92.

[4]Wrestling with bulls on pastoral tracts in the sixth century A.D. is described in the Tamilian work, Mullaikkali. The sporting bulls varied from the wild gaur, or a close relative, to a fully domesticated bull with white spots on brown skin. That the sport was dangerous is emphasized by the fact that eventually the bulls' horns became "red with blood and had guts winding around them." As "the son of the buffalo-herd" is also mentioned, the same people were probably herding buffaloes (Iyengar 1929: 578-580).

[5]The Raa Phasé Pardi tribesmen of Maharashtra still employ cattle and cloth screens to approach game (Kosambi 1967: 104).

[6]This data was obtained from Kuodrom, Seventh Day Adventist Mission, Coonoor, 1965.

[7]Murray B. Emeneau has written about Christian Todas who turned to agriculture (Emeneau 1939: 93-106). For information concerning agriculture near Toda hamlets, the writer is indebted to Anthony Walker.

[8]In 1865 a hunter described a fight to the finish between a gaur and tiger near a camp located by the small Upper Bhavani Stream on the upper Nilgiris. The hunter's friend shot two gaurs near the fight location (Old Shekarry 1865: 241, 252-257).

[9]The tentative period is based upon an approximate period established through archaeological work conducted by Sir Mortimer Wheeler and artifactual finds (Wheeler 1959: 162-163).

231 771 796 (351) day, but only the most devout follow this practice now (Harkness 1832: 114-115). In January, shortly before goddess Masthi Hathai is honored at Bergani, the Badagas celebrate Hartu Pongal. Courtyards fronting houses are swept and freshly coudunged. Women and children then decorate the courtyards with kitchen ash or powdered lime (Plate X, E). Before each house a square with diagonal lines is outlined. After the decorations have been completed, a priest leads a cow through the village from house to house. When the cow stops at each house, it is fed a flatcake made with millet, rice, or wheat and served on a platter placed in the center of the above-mentioned square (Plate X, F). Household women bow to the ground as the cow eats. After it has eaten and had its mouth washed off, the cow is led to the next house. Some time later a calf led around in the same fashion receives similar treatment at each house. Finally, community families feast upon flatcakes served with sugar or curry.

• 174 241 796 [174] Hunting. Although writers have not referred to the Badagas as hunters, there is some evidence that they were. Past practices are probably preserved in more recent ritual. Among other acts connected with the opening of the main agricultural season at Malur, Francis (1908: 339) recorded that a hunting net was laid before a Badaga priest. After the priest had prayed for a favorable agricultural season, a pretense was made of spearing two fowls which had been thrown into the net, and it was then placed across a game path. A wild animal (sambar deer, if possible) driven into the net was slain, and Badagas divided its carcass among themselves. In July, 1963, a few Badaga men

174 224

•174 224 from Ketti took the shredded remnant of a hunting net and two spears to a point upon the mountainside behind Ketti. While two men held up the net remnant, two with spears charged at it. Then all sat in a circle and sang folk songs before returning the equipment to the Hirodaya temple. Using these examples, it seems likely that the Badagas once hunted with nets and spears. Now they use muzzle-loaders, shotguns, and rifles. Although a few go hunting, most guns are employed in the protection of crops from such animals as black-naped hares (Lepus nigricollis F. Cuv.), pigs, and porcupines. 411 (224) (241)

Other occupations. From the time Englishmen started to settle on the Nilgiris, outside employment became available. Both poor and wealthier Badagas took advantage of ever-increasing job opportunities. By 1829 many poorer Badagas were performing all types of labor (Hough 1829: 96). In 1860 a few were working on coffee plantations, but by 1868 many males were working as artisans or laborers on European-owned plantations (Markham 1862: 376; Shortt 1868: 58). There were Badaga clerks, cordite factory workers, building and road contractors, forest guards, gardeners, and school teachers by 1909, and before 1934 wage earning became the main means of livelihood for many Badagas (Thurston 1909, 1: 63; Ranga 1934: 11). Badagas are presently employed in the Government of India Cordite Factory, the Needle Industries (India) Ltd., and the Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company in the Nilgiris. Some Badagas have a high school education, and a few are university graduates. As a result, there are Badaga clerks and professionals employed in private industries, or in positions with the 175 177 464 463 (871)

8: Hockings E-S (1962-1977) 1982 AW50 Badaga AW50

who fled from that situation and settled on the hills as Badagas (i.e., "northerners") came mainly from the agricultural Okkaliga caste in the Mysore Plain. What their social organization may have been there is obscure and irrelevant. It seems that the small groups of refugees, torn from their caste affiliations, were so fragmented that the basic social unit among them as settlers was the joint family, not the *jati* or caste. It is still the ideal residential unit.

Today we find no castes in Badaga society. These people live in a tribal milieu, surrounded by the indigenous Toda, Kota, Kurumba, and Iruļa tribes, and they have become fairly tribe-like themselves. The community is divided into ten phratries which are mainly endogamous. Two of these are vegetarian; all are primarily agricultural. Each phratry is made up of a number of exogamous clans, anything from two to sixteen of them, and these clans are in turn segmented into quite a few exogamous lineages. As with the famed Nigerian case of the Tallensi, there are actually lineages within lineages, so that we may need to speak about maximal (*kuḍumbu*), major (*kutti*), minor (*kutti*), and minimal (*guppu*) lineages, even though not every clan currently has all four levels of lineage. Segments of the minimal lineages are in fact extended families, counting back for about five generations, and with most of their members still alive.

These larger social units have a complicated history and organization (detailed in Hockings 1980), and they will not be considered further in this present study. It is nonetheless relevant to mention how they fit into the residence pattern. The Badagas live in about 370 exclusively Badaga villages which are normally exogamous. Marriage is virilocal. Each village is thus the home of one or more patrilineages all belonging to one clan (and hence, one phratry). But with few exceptions a clan is not confined to a single village.

One particular village, Tu:ne:ri, was the first place to be settled, in the late 16th century, as a result of which its headman became the paramount chief. This position, like all Badaga headmanships, has descended patrilineally within the family. Every other village has its own headman, descended from the founder, and clusters of neighbouring villages form a commune around one particular village whose headman is also acknowledged to be the commune headman. Furthermore, the whole of the plateau area has been divided into four quarters, and one man is recognized as the regional headman in each quarter. At every one of the four levels of headmanship there is also a council, made up of inferior headmen (except in the case of the village council, which consists of lineage elders who work with the traditional village headman).

The society is relatively homogeneous in the sense that, although the ten phratries are ranked into a widely accepted hierarchy, all families were traditionally subsistence farmers of millet and all lived by essentially the same kinship rules. We will therefore be able to explore the meaning of these rules without constant reference to exceptions and alternatives found only in certain sectors of the society.

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AW50 Badaga AW50

THE BADAGAS OF THE NILAGIRI DISTRICT:—1.

101 Of all the original inhabitants of the Nilagiri District, the Badagas are the most remarkable in every way. Their settlement in
• 174 these hills is not as ancient as that of the Tôdas, Irulas, and Kurumbas, for they are only comparatively recent settlers from the Maisûr country. About the history of their settlement Mr. Grigg, in his *District Manual*, (p. 218), speaks as follows:—

"The Badagas or *Northmen* are the descendants of Kanarese colonists "from the Carnatic country known now as North Coimbatore and South "Mysore which at one time formed an important part of the ancient Konga "kingdom. It is commonly reported that the principal migrations took "place about three hundred years ago on the breaking up of the Vijaya- "nagar Empire. * * * * These Kanarese colonists probably migrated to "the Hills when driven from home by famine, political turmoil, or local "oppression."

Thus in Mr. Grigg's opinion these three causes,—famine, political turmoil and local oppression,—each by itself or all combined must have driven those people to find a more convenient home in the Hills three centuries ago, and the same writer gives several proofs of the fact that they must have migrated to the Nilagiris about the time when there existed a Kanarese supremacy over these parts of India.

43 The Badagas have all crafts and professions within their own community. They have their own barbers, carpenters, washermen, blacksmiths, scavengers, brick-makers; in short, they are a self-contained community having among themselves representatives of every art or profession that adds to the comfort of life. It is note-
(174) worthy that these artizans serve only their own caste people—the Badagas—and never others, for this is, in my opinion, one of the best indications to prove that, as a race of colonists in an unknown land, they must have brought with them all crafts and arts to make their stay in the new country to which they went as comfortable as possible.

174 They must have come as agriculturists in the expectation that they would find in these high regions land lying waste in plenty which they could easily occupy and cultivate, and thus lead a life of plenty and happiness. In these high expectations they must have been thoroughly disappointed. At the very first point of settlement, they must have met with opposition from the Tôdas who were already masters of the soil. But instead of retiring and returning

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AW50 Badaga AW50

to their own country they preferred to settle down as the cultivators of the Tôda-lands, acknowledging the Tôdas as their landlords, and themselves taking up the humble position of farmers under them; and the lazy Tôda who was extremely glad to get people to cultivate his lands was thoroughly satisfied with this arrangement. Even to this day the Badagas, in acknowledgment of their subordination to the Tôdas, pay their *Gûdu*—their tenants' fee—to these landlords of the Nîlagiris.

Another fact that seems to indicate that the Badagas are immigrants is that a crude kind of polyandry exists among them. Badaga society allows this practice, and it is not uncommon when a man has five sons for only one of them to be married, though Badagas when questioned about it stoutly deny the existence of this custom. If the marriage tie is in this respect somewhat lax, the Badaga rules in other ways are very strict, and a woman would be at once out-casted who went astray with a person of a different caste. The existence of this custom among the Badagas is, as has been said, probably to be explained by the fact that they are immigrants. Naturally most of those who came up from Maisûr would be men, and the hardships consequent upon the great change of climate and habits of life would tell more severely upon the women than upon the hardier male sex. The practice of polyandry having thus been allowed to grow up obtained the sanction of custom, and still prevails as a caste-rule to which little or no objection is made.

This custom, the existence of all crafts and arts among themselves, and the payments of *Gûdu* in recognition of the Tôdas as their landlords, are three very strong proofs of the contention that the Badagas are only colonists on these hills, and are not the original inhabitants.

There are several sects among the Badagas. Mr. Grigg enumerates eighteen—seven major and eleven minor. From the results of my researches I consider that all these eighteen may be simplified into six—five high-caste and one low-caste.

They are

1. Udaya
2. Hâruva
3. Adhikâri
4. Kanaka
5. Badaga

(High caste.)

6. Toraya ... (Low caste.)

Udayas are Lingâyats in religion and carry the *Sivalinga*—the

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AW50 Badaga AW50

342 roof of it is well planked, and over it is another small room called *Mêlâdu*—upper storey—which serves as a store-house. Next to the *Edirmanê*, on the right, is the *Hâgôlu*—the milk house—a place of worship to the Badagas, into which the women are not allowed to enter; and adjoining it is the kitchen, called *Hole* by the Badagas; the last of all the rooms is the *Pilli*—bath-room. Thus the front room, a store-room over it, the milk-house, a kitchen and a bath-room complete the arrangement of a Badaga house.

352 The Badaga invests some money in that most necessary piece of furniture in a cold climate,—a family cot to sleep upon. It is always a broad thick plank of some fine wood—teak, jack or ebony, and is the only substantial movable property of a Badaga.

121 We shall now describe the Badaga ceremonies and rites, and the best way to exhaust them is to trace an individual from the time of his birth to his death. Of course some difference must exist in the case of males and females, and these we shall note as we proceed.

852 (551) In the case of a boy little or almost nothing is done to the child as a ceremony till his ninth year. On the third month after his birth he is given a name, and his head is shaved. But nothing further occurs till the baby has grown into a boy of nine years. Then

881 the initiation of the boy into the duties of a Badaga—milking the buffaloes—is performed. In describing the Badaga house I have already made mention of the *Hâgôlu*—the milk house—a place of

(547) (558) worship in which the milk is stored up. Females are debarred from entrance into it, and so are the male children till they undergo this ceremony which we are about to describe.

Early in the morning of the day appointed for this ceremony the boy is bathed and appears in his holiday dress. A she-buffalo with her calf stands before his house waiting to be milked. The parents or other elder relations of the boy and those who have been invited to be present on the occasion, or whose duty it is to be present, then conduct the boy to the spot. The father or some one of the agnatic kindred gives into the hands of the boy a bamboo vessel called *Hoge* which is already very nearly full of fresh-drawn milk. The boy receives the vessel with both his hands and is conducted to the buffalo. The elder relations show him the process, and the boy sitting down milks a small quantity into the *Hoge*. This is his first initiation into the duty of milking; and it is that he may not commit mistakes on the very first day of his milking that the *Hoge*

(547) is previously filled almost to the brim. It is extremely curious to see that this is observed as a regular ceremony, and it indicates

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AW50 Badaga AW50

that originally this milking of the buffaloes must have been the main vocation of the Badagas. The boy then takes the vessel thus filled with milk into his house and pours some of the sacred fluid into all his household eating vessels—a sign that from that day he has taken upon himself the responsibility of supplying the family with milk. He also throws some milk on the faces of his parents and relatives. They receive it very kindly and bless him, each in his or her turn, and request him to continue thus to milk the buffaloes and bring plenty and prosperity to the house. After this the boy enters the milk-house—the *Hâgôtu*—and places milk in his *Hoge* there. From this moment and all through his life he may enter into that room, and this is therefore considered a very important ceremony.

The next important rite among the Liṅgâyat sect of the Badagas is the wearing of the *Liṅga*, or the initiation of the boy into his religion, which takes place about the thirteenth birthday of the boy. The priest conducts this ceremony and the elder relations of the family have only to arrange for the performance of it. The priests belong to the Uḍaya sect of the Badagas. They live in their own villages, and are specially sent for and come up to the boy's village for the occasion. The ceremony is done generally to several Badaga boys of almost the same age on the same day. On the day appointed all the people in the Badaga village where this ceremony is to take place observe a strict fast. The cows and buffaloes are all milked very early in the morning and not a drop of the milk thus collected is given out or taken by even the tenderest children of the village who may require it very badly. The Uḍaya priest who has been invited arrives near the village between 10 and 12 A.M. on the day appointed. He never goes into the village, but stops near some rivulet adjacent to it. The relations of the boy or boys approach him with a new basket containing five measures of uncooked rice and pulse, ghee, &c., and a quarter of a rupee,—one fanam, as it is generally designated. The priest sits near the water-course and lights up a fire on the bank. Perfumes are thrown profusely into it and this is almost the only ceremony before the fire. The boys whose turn it is to receive the *Liṅga* that day are all directed to bathe in the river. A plantain leaf cut into one foot square is placed in front of the fire towards the east of it. The *Liṅgas*, kept in readiness by the parents of the boys, are now received by the priest and placed on the leaves. The boys are asked to wash them—each one the *Liṅga* meant for his wearing—in water and milk. Then comes the time for the expenditure of all the collected milk of

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AM50 Badaga AM50

dynasty of Madura. To these Nâyakkas or Vaḍugas the Baḍagas were allied, and they were thus originally the Śûdras of the Maisûr country. They were, however, completely Âryanised before they commenced their march three centuries ago to the district where they now live, and it is therefore not surprising that they should have brought with them many of the ancient Âryan institutions.

Chief among these may be noted the system of local self-government that even yet exists among them though in an impaired form. From the traces that are still left it is evident that the village community system prevailed among them in a complete state in the old days of their settlement on the Nîlagiris.

Each village has a head man called the Monegar. He is generally the richest man in the village, and is regarded as the highest authority upon all subjects. Before the year 1830, while the Nîlagiri district had not yet been made a separate district but only formed a single tâluk in the Coimbatore district, the power of these Monegars was much greater than it is now. At that time communication was difficult and much of the Nîlagiris had not yet been opened up, and in the different villages the Monegar was the paramount power. Stories are current even to the present day of a Monegar of one village who ordered an individual who had disobeyed his orders to be covered with a slab of stone. Unless the disobedience was of a most flagrant nature and really amounted to a determined disregard of constituted authority, such a high-handed exercise of autocratic power must have been resented by the people, for the Monegar was not an irresponsible autocrat, but a ruler holding his power by the goodwill of the whole community. The British Government has made these Monegars officials in connection with the revenue administration of the villages, but apart from this they still have certain important duties to perform in connection with the social life of the Baḍaga community. In all religious and social questions the Baḍagas go to the village Monegar. If the question is a simple one he settles it himself, if it is intricate he calls a village council to which the elders of the village are summoned. After taking their opinion he passes an order which must be obeyed, for his word is law.

Questions of partition, of cultivation and of outcasting, disputes and other minor matters, are thus settled by the village council with the Monegar as its head. It is, however, in questions arising in connexion with marriage that the Monegar and his council play their most important part. When a girl in one village is going to